

**For Immediate Release  
January 18, 2005**

**Contact: Andrea Ewin Turner  
(615) 532-5645 (office)  
(615) 418-3703 (cell)**

**DCS LAUNCHES INTERNAL AFFAIRS INVESTIGATION OF INCIDENT INVOLVING EMPLOYEE  
Commissioner Miller Designates Leadership Team To Oversee Wilson County DCS Office**

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** -- The Department of Children's Services has launched an internal affairs investigation into a January 14 incident, where a Wilson County DCS employee, and a former agency employee went to a Rutherford County hospital and incorrectly indicated they were there on departmental business to gain access to the facility's nursery. The employee who was involved in the incident has been placed on administrative leave.

Additionally, Commissioner Viola Miller has designated a team to assume leadership of the Wilson County DCS office, which is responsible for providing agency services to Wilson and Trousdale Counties. Commissioner Miller decided to pursue this course of action because of this and another incident that occurred in November 2004. In that case, the Department initiated an IA investigation of a referral received regarding a 19-month old Wilson County boy who ingested cocaine. That investigation, which is still open, was launched to determine whether appropriate policies and procedures were followed.

"At this time, our information is extremely limited, and we are allowing the internal affairs investigation to run its course, but on the surface, this incident is extremely troubling," said Commissioner Miller. "I want to ensure an appropriate level of care and service is being provided to children and families in Wilson and Trousdale Counties, not just for the short-term, but the long-term as well."

The leadership team is made up of senior level staff from other regions and Central Office, and will arrive in Wilson County today to provide oversight and ensure the work is handled appropriately and timely. In addition to completing reviews of open casework in Wilson County, the team will conduct an organizational assessment to examine the overall functionality of the office, whether the right resources are in place and what systemic issues are at play. Based on the assessment, the team will develop recommendations and implement a plan of action. The recommendations could be determined and implemented in as few as six weeks. The leadership team will then evaluate the plan's effectiveness. The entire process could take three to six months to complete.

###